

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 13 and 16 are amended. Support for the amendments may be found at, for example, paragraph [0011] of the specification. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims at least in light of the following remarks.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives by Examiner Hung at the interview held June 24 are appreciated. Applicant's amend independent claims 1, 13 and 16, as recommended by the Examiner, to qualify the region characteristic information and further distinguish the references of record. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are also incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Herley (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0146173), and further in view of Tsukada (U.S. Patent No. 7,016,075) and Miyabata (U.S. Patent No. 5,418,574). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

With regards to independent claim 1, as discussed during the personal interview, Applicants assert that Herley, Tsukada and Miyabata, either alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest at least an image correction device that corrects the pixel information of the pixels constituting the image object region based on region characteristic information indicating a statistical value that represents a characteristic of the image object region, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 13 and 16.

The Office Action admits that both Herley and Tsukada do not disclose an "image correction device [that] corrects the pixel information of the pixels constituting the portions based on characteristic information of two image object regions that surround the portions."

See the Office Action at page 5. The Office Action relies on Miyabata to disclose this feature.

Referring to Miyabata, there is disclosed a linear interpolation method, applied in the boundary area (i.e. between pixels n1 and n2), for correcting color difference values (see, for example, Miyabata at col. 21, lines 1-4). Miyabata further discloses (in step s191) the color difference value at the leading edge pixel n1 being read and stored as CD1 and (in step s192) the color difference at the trailing edge pixel n2 being read and stored as CD2. See Fig. 25 and col. 21, lines 6-10. However, as discussed during the personal interview, the alleged characteristic information values, CD1 and CD2, respectively, of n1 and n2, are **not** statistical values that represent a characteristic of each region, as recited in claim 1.

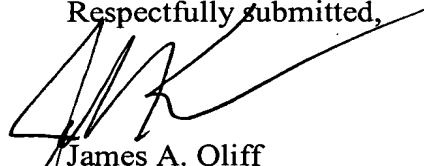
As is clear from the above description, Miyabata does not overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Herley and Tsukada. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Herley, Tsukada and Miyabata.

Claims 13 and 16 recite similar features to those discussed above in connection with claim 1, are thus also patentable over Herley, Tsukada and Miyabata. Claims 3, 5, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 depend, indirectly or directly, from claims 1, 13 and 16. Thus, claims 3, 5, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 are also patentable over Herley, Tsukada and Miyabata for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 13 and 16, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination

Date: July 17, 2008

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